

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving, using a data tracking and notification system, a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

specifying a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in [[for]] the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value;
identifying, using the data tracking and notification system, a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;

accessing, using the data tracking and notification system, a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing the ~~the~~ ~~[[an]]~~ expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing ~~determining~~ ~~the~~ ~~[[an]]~~ actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system; ~~[[and]]~~

executing, using the data tracking and notification system, the first rule set to compute the expected value and compute ~~determine~~ the actual value for the first billing cycle event; ~~[[.]]~~

comparing, using the data tracking and notification system, the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issuing, using the data tracking and notification system, a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

2-4 (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~[[3]]~~, further comprising the steps of:

subsequent to issuing the first notification, determining, using the data tracking and notification system, an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event; and

issuing, using the data tracking and notification system, a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds ~~[[the]]~~ a second threshold value~~second predetermined notification~~.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A data tracking and notification system for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the data tracking and notification system comprising:

a data tracking engine configured to:

retrieve obtain a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

specifying a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in [[for]] the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value;

and

a rule-based engine configured to:

identify a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;[[,]]

access a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event,
the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing the expected
value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the expected value
for the first billing cycle event and for computing the actual value for the
first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized
billing system[[and]];

execute the first rule set to compute the [[a]] first expected value
for the first billing cycle event and to determine-compute the [[a]] first
actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by
the computerized billing system;[[.]]

compare the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the
actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first
billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing
cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issuing a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle
event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

8-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The system of ~~as recited in claim 7~~, wherein the rule-based engine is further configured to determine an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event subsequent to issuing the first notification, and issue a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds a second predetermined threshold.

12-18 (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the computer program product including computer program code for performing the steps of:

retrieving a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value;
identifying, using the data tracking and notification system, a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;

accessing a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing the expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system;

executing the first rule set to compute the expected value and compute the actual value for the first billing cycle event;

comparing the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issuing a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

~~retrieving a billing schedule specifying a plurality of billing cycle events for the billing cycle;~~

~~identifying a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;~~

~~accessing a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing an expected value for the billing cycle event and for determining an actual value for the billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system; and~~

~~executing the first rule set to compute the expected value and determine the actual value for the first billing cycle event.~~

20-22 (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) The computer program product ~~of as recited in claim~~ 19, further comprising computer program code for performing the steps of:

subsequent to issuing the first notification, determining an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event; and

issuing a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds a second predetermined threshold.

24. (Canceled)

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